

News and Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Q2 Board Meeting Held 01/04/2025

Dog Island Conservation District

P.O. Box 14288

Tallahassee, FL 32317-4288

<http://dogislandconservationdistrict.org>



DOG ISLAND
CONSERVATION DISTRICT



Important Alerts and Notices

Remember: Carrabelle lot parking with DICD **hang tag only**. You can be towed!
Q3, 2025 Board meeting to be held April 5 at 10:30 AM at the Yacht Club, weather permitting.



You Can Help Dog Island's Rare Coastal Birds



Breeding Season

February 15 – September 1

Who Needs A Tree?

Rare shorebirds and seabirds lay their eggs directly on the sand, trusting camouflage to protect them. We're lucky in the Panhandle to be one of the most important places in Florida for these special birds. With a little help from us, they can survive and we can enjoy our time on the water too.

Respect Posted Nesting Signs

Sensitive nesting areas are posted with signs and rope. Baby birds and eggs may be in these areas, even if you don't see any. Please do not disturb or enter these areas.



*Areas highlighted in orange indicate sensitive shorebird nesting areas. Please respect posted signs.



Walk Without Your Pet Near Nest Areas

You may know your furry friend is harmless, but birds are easily frightened away from their nests by curious pets. Eggs and baby birds left behind can die in the hot Florida sun in a matter of minutes.

Give the Birds A Little Space

If you see birds on the beach, please give them some room. If you get too close, frightened birds may leave their nests and expose baby birds and eggs to predators.



Disturbance

Birds along the Gulf Coast use various habitats to live and nest. When adult birds are frightened and leave their nests, eggs and baby birds can die in the hot Florida sun in a matter of minutes. Humans, boats and pets can easily scare these coastal birds from their nests.



Please Don't Feed the Wildlife

Feeding wildlife like gulls, crows and raccoons attracts these unwelcome predators to beaches where they also eat rare baby birds and eggs.

Avoid Driving on the Beach

Ruts created by vehicles on the beach create barriers for the birds and can trap small baby birds. Drive 10mph or less and look for chicks in the way.



How You Can Help

Join our stewarding program to educate others and monitor baby bird sites. Visit FlBeachBirds.org to learn more.



A Message from the Chair

"The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention." -Oscar Wilde

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members." -Coretta Scott King

Over the last two-plus years, the Dog Island Conservation District has taken great strides in repairing and upgrading large parts of the island's infrastructure. We have repaired the ferry dock in Carrabelle, made the island shop weather-tight, instigated and assisted with a more resilient power grid, repaired a trash compactor container, and replaced the LCM finger dock and lime rock revetment, among other improvements. However, one of our largest infrastructure items is almost at the end of its useful life: the Tyson Harbor ferry dock. Its "Bailey Bridge" and bulkhead need complete replacement. Eighty years of hard use and the ravages of time and weather now necessitate this extensive repair work. The floating dock and superstructure are still in good shape, but the World War II-era metal and wood joists and girders, the decking and railing, along with the bulkhead at the shoreline, are past repairing.



Per our initial bid proposal, an institutional-level repair, which should last for decades, will cost around \$135,000. Would you consider a tax-deductible donation towards this very necessary capital improvement? Please step up to help, as our limited budget is not adequate to address this extraordinary expenditure. Even if you have your own boat and slip, there are good reasons to financially support this project. This dock serves the interests of many island property owners: our older residents no longer willing or able to maintain a private boat, family members and friends who rely on the ferry service to visit, and especially people who need to be evacuated to the mainland by our first responders. This dock truly is essential to our community and our goals of preservation and conservation.

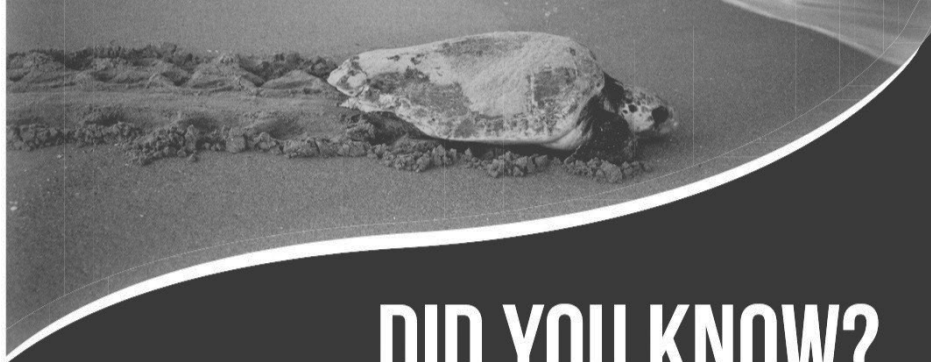
The big mat that was donated by the Teaf family and laid down on the dock for safety purposes was a good start and extended the life of the dock, but now is the time to act to strengthen this important focal point of our island community. Please give as generously as you can. For further information you can speak to any Board member.

To donate, please send a check made out to the Dog Island Conservation District with “capital improvement/dock repair” on the memo line to the following address:

Dog Island Conservation District
PO Box 14288
Tallahassee FL 32317-4288

Many thanks in advance!





DID YOU KNOW?

LIGHT POLLUTION THREATENS WILDLIFE!

For billions of years, life has relied on Earth's day-night rhythm to govern life-sustaining behaviors. It's encoded in the DNA of all plants and animals. Humans have radically disrupted this cycle by lighting up the night. Research shows that artificial light at night has negative and deadly effects on many species.

Artificial Lights Disrupt the World's Ecosystems



Sea turtles live in the ocean but hatch on the beach at night. Hatchlings find the sea by detecting the bright horizon over the ocean. Artificial lights can draw them away from the sea, stranding them on land. In Florida alone, millions of hatchlings die this way every year.

Many insects are drawn to light, but artificial lights can create a fatal attraction. Declining insect populations negatively impact all species that rely on insects for food or pollination.

Nocturnal mammals sleep in the day and are active at night. Light pollution disrupts their nighttime environment.

Artificial Lights Endanger Many Bird Species

Artificial lights can disrupt the migratory schedules of birds causing them to leave too early or too late in the season, missing ideal conditions for nesting. Birds that navigate by moonlight and starlight can wander off course. Millions die every year by colliding into illuminated buildings.



Special Reports

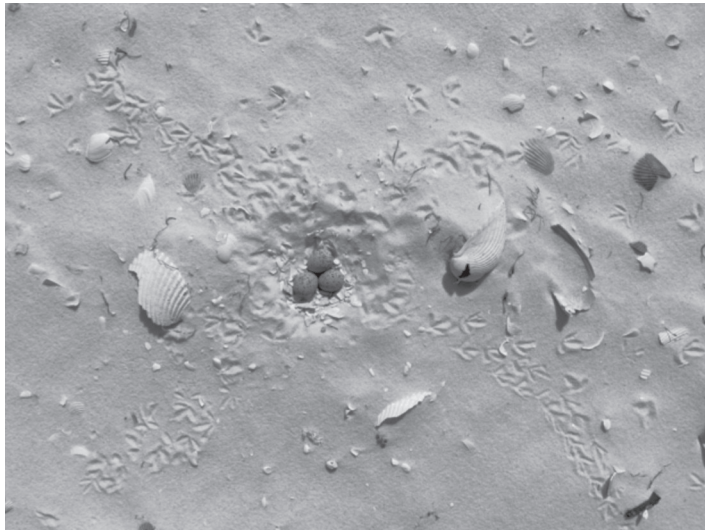
New Year, Same Beach-Nesting Birds

Brian Cammarano, Audubon Florida

The start of a new year on Dog Island reminds us that shorebird nesting season is right around the corner. Nesting season stretches across nearly seven months of the year and Dog Island is a critical area for many of our imperiled species. We can work together as a community to be aware of what our beach-nesting birds are up to at all times of the year!



Did you know that February 15 officially marks the start of the shorebird nesting season? Snowy Plovers, which are mostly nonmigratory, have been documented to begin nesting as early as mid-February. In fact, the earliest known Snowy Plover nest in Florida was found on February 14 in St. George Island State Park. Unlike other beach-nesting birds, Snowy Plovers don't need to prepare for migration and typically stay within a few miles of their breeding grounds. This allows them to focus on establishing territories much earlier than other shorebirds resulting in Dog Island's first nesting shorebirds of the season.



Take a moment to envision a typical bird's nest. You may picture a nest built from carefully picked twigs with a clutch of eggs at the center high up in a tree away from any disturbances or potential dangers. Now think about the shores of Dog Island where these birds spend their entire lives. Not many trees around... So, where do our shorebirds nest? Well, they've adapted to their environment in an extraordinary way! All five of Florida's imperiled beach-nesting birds are considered ground nesters, meaning they lay their eggs in the sand secured in place by nothing more than a small "scrape".

That's why it's essential to understand the impacts humans may have on these nesting shorebirds if we're not careful. For example, when an incubating Snowy Plover is disturbed and pushed off her nest, the remaining eggs are extremely vulnerable to predators like crows and are exposed to the elements, including intense summer heat. Human-caused disturbance is one of the top causes of nest failure in beach-nesting birds. The more we are aware of our impacts, hopefully, the less likely we are to disturb them.

Here are a few ways you can help keep disturbances to a minimum for our busy beach-nesting birds:



- **Share the shore** – Give birds plenty of space. Getting too close can alarm parents, causing them to expend precious energy defending their nests.
- **Respect Posted Areas** – Roped-off sections of the beach are home to nesting birds. Even if you don't see them, remember that birds and their nests are well camouflaged.
- **Keep Pets Away** – Even well-trained dogs can pose a threat to nesting birds. Always follow leash laws and keep pets away from nesting areas.
- **Avoid Feeding Wildlife & Stash the trash** – Feeding wildlife (especially seagulls) will attract predators and can be detrimental to our nesting birds. Keep beaches clean by picking up all your trash after a day out in the sun.

As the nesting season quickly approaches, there will be opportunities to help our shorebird biologists with pre-season posting in early February. If you would like to get involved in shorebird stewarding or to find out more information please visit Audubon Florida's website: <https://fl.audubon.org/get-involved/coastal-bird-stewardship> or email Alie MacVicar, Audubon FL's Carrabelle Shorebird Biologist, directly at Alexandra.Macvicar@audubon.org. Please consider joining our Facebook page by searching "Florida Panhandle Shorebird Stewards" in the Facebook search bar.

Minutes of the Q2 Board Meeting, January 4, 2025

Call to Order:

10:30 a.m. Board members present: Mr. Stone, Mr. Will, Ms. Kellett, Mr. Brady and Mr. Hudson.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve Mr. Brady, second Mr. Hudson, approved unanimously.

Approval of the previous minutes:

Motion to approve Mr. Brady, second Ms. Kellett. In the discussion Mr. Gronholm voiced a concern about how a certain section had been transcribed. The Chair noted that this topic was listed under old business and could easily be addressed in that discussion. Mr. Gronholm acquiesced. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Report:

The Chair thanked those in attendance and said that he too was happy to be in attendance, considering. The Chair spoke about how the island had come through Helene and pointed out that, while there was damage to beach, bayside and harbor, we were fortunate relative to neighboring communities to our east. He noted that the upgraded power grid had performed well, with only one day off on the western half of the main body of the island, and no downtime on the eastern half. Several comments were made about poles down or leaning in the narrows and west end. The Chair noted that the west end lies completely outside the District, and both narrows will continue to be problematic due to their very nature. Because they are a part of our system, however, they will be a long-term issue that needs to be addressed by Duke Energy.

The Chair addressed uncontrolled/unleashed dogs on the island and stated that neither persons nor their pets should be fearful to walk our island. Everyone should be aware of the Franklin County animal control ordinance/ leash law and to obey it! Please think about your neighbor.

The Chair asked for a motion to reaffirm and support Mr. Ken Jones of Rhumblin as our consultant, point person and liaison with FDEM, FEMA, DEP, and the Army Corps of Engineers as we navigate post-storm debris removal, emergency protective measures and the application for storm expense reimbursement. Motion made by Ms. Kellett, seconded by Mr. Brady, passed unanimously.

The Chair asked for a second motion authorizing him to sign a hurricane grant agreement document with DHS, FEMA and FDEM, further establishing our link with these entities going forward. It is a 37-page standard agreement stipulating how we will conform to FEMA practices and standards and act in an appropriate, truthful and forthright manner. The Chair had asked Mr. Teaf and Mr. Jones to review



the document, which they did. Motion made by Mr. Hudson, seconded by Mr. Brady, passed unanimously.

The Chair reminded the group of the upcoming shorebird and sea turtle nesting seasons and asked for assistance with efforts such as “lights out,” “leave no trace,” and respecting demarcated bird nesting areas. Mr. Appen wanted to know how to volunteer with marking these bird nesting areas (Audubon usually does so in early February) and was directed to the contact information in the Audubon article in the most recent newsletter. A discussion then ensued about the remaining Helene debris and how long the District would be willing to accept it free of charge. Several end dates were suggested, but the agreement was that the debris had to be removed no later than the beginning of bird nesting season, February 15th. Mr. Sparrow, who has been doing yeoman’s work in this regard, was asked by Mr. Brady to work closely with Mr. Buckley to remove several large pieces of debris from the beach, again by that date. Ms. Shanks suggested another debris cleanup on February 8th or 9th, since there are areas that have yet to be addressed. Thank you to those volunteers who have done so much to make the island safer and more attractive!

Treasurer’s Report:

Mr. Brady began by saying he did not have the most current DICD financial reports for review due to time constraints and the late arrival of some important invoices. He gave attendees the opportunity to sign up to obtain these reports when they become available and will also distribute these reports to the Board at that time. He described our current financial position in some detail, including the Franklin County stipend we receive, the tipping fee credit from the same source, and the ad valorem tax revenue payments. He commented that the District is on target with our budgeting month-to-month process and finances, and he is pleased with our current fiscal standing. Motion to accept by Ms. Kellett, second by Mr. Will, passed unanimously.



Island Manager Report:

Mr. Buckley stated that both the tractor and truck are running well, although the truck will need continuous repairs. As examples, he has replaced/repared the door hinges, air tank and track guides. The LCM is running well but does need two new batteries. He is very pleased with the new LCM finger dock and triple tree tie-offs. We have repaired and painted our best compactor receiver and have hopes of many years remaining on its service life. The Chair asked for a motion to purchase a new compactor receiver to replace the other one the District owns, which is about to fail. Mr. Will made a motion to purchase the standard model (slightly smaller than the current one) and have it appropriately coated for the Dog Island environment, second by Mr. Brady, passed unanimously. Mr. Buckley spoke about the south-facing shop door splitting and becoming inoperable. Motion by Mr. Brady to purchase a new roll door, second by Mr. Will, passed unanimously. Mr. Buckley asked to purchase a new back flow valve for the Carrabelle river ferry dock lot. Motion by Mr. Brady to do so with a cap of \$500, second by Ms. Kellett, passed unanimously. The District has unfortunately not yet set up the credit card reader as planned to accommodate using it as a payment option for islanders wishing to bring over vehicles or remove white goods etc. Mr. Brady said he would restart the process very soon. Finally, Mr. Buckley commented on

the condition of the airstrip surface, saying that the tractor tires sink in while mowing. This was seen as a topic for the Airport Committee. The Chair noted that the LCM is currently scheduled to be pulled out of the water for hull maintenance beginning the second half of February for at least six weeks, and islanders need to plan cargo runs accordingly. The Board thanked Mr. Buckley for all his efforts on behalf of the District.

Volunteer Fire Department Committee Report:

Mr. Cannon stated that both trucks were up and running, with the big truck still needing additional repairs. He noted that Mr. Sparrow, Mr. Atwell and Mr. Gronholm had all worked on the big truck after it had sat for a considerable time, and he welcomed further assistance on it. They will be organizing a volunteer day soon. A cell phone booster has been installed at the fire house to ensure better communications. The DIVFD is in good shape financially, but insurance rates continue to climb. Duke Energy has agreed to move their new building behind the fire house and to meet our other stipulations regarding vegetation and lighting. A CPR class was held recently. Mr. Cannon asked anyone interested to reach out to him to become a volunteer or for equipment instruction. New AED equipment has been purchased, and four fully maintained units are available at diverse locations (see revised location map in this newsletter). There was a discussion of how the 911 communication system works with redundant backup systems, but the key point was call 911 first! Mr. Cannon emphasized that all islanders should be mindful of the difficulty and time required to receive help and be evacuated from the island.

Airport Committee Report:

Mr. Gronholm, who is acting as Chair of this committee, said he has contacted a group of aviators including Mr. Ashton and Mr. Atwell who have agreed to serve, and Mr. Cannon has agreed to be their on-site representative. Mr. Sparrow will consult for and assist a reconstituted committee. They have discussed issues like the ruts in the airstrip, finding fill and funding. They were thanked for their willingness to serve.

Old Business

A. Parking: Discussing the newly instituted hang tag parking process for the Carrabelle River lot, the Chair noted that it is now clearly posted with tow graphics, making it obvious that any vehicle parked there needs a hang tag on display. These permits have been mailed to homeowners, and with one known exception have been received. Mr. Appen asked that the District remind homeowners to inform their workers and contractors of the change of systems and the need to display one of these hang tags or possibly be towed. The Chair addressed the question of “what if someone owns two habitable homes?” People in this category were sent two hang tags, as it was the same family. However, while this only affects three or four homeowners, in the interest of fairness and consistency, owners of two homes should have received two tags for each of these habitable homes. After some discussion, motion by Mr. Will, second by Mr. Brady to make that a clear policy going forward, i.e., owners of two homes receive two sets of hang tags. Mr. Appen said it was his understanding that the City of Carrabelle has a no-tow policy, so cars can be parked in designated spaces along Marine Street and not be towed. The Chair briefly discussed the parking situation on the



island and said that it would be most helpful if people owning a dead or dying vehicle would contact Mr. Buckley to have it removed expeditiously. There is no reason to wait until another vehicle is brought out, and the removal is free.

B. Ferry Docks: At the Direction of the Chair, as an emergency protective order for health and safety purposes, with the acknowledgment of the Board, a new LCM finger dock with triple-tree docking features was built to replace the one destroyed by Helene. As another emergency protective measure, a lime rock embankment/revetment was constructed east of the ferry dock to the DICD property line. These measures may be eligible for reimbursement by FEMA as appropriate storm response actions, and paperwork is being developed by our consultant with that in mind. The Chair addressed the Tyson Harbor Ferry dock and its serious and ongoing deterioration. The WWII-era components of this vital structure, i.e., the Bailey bridge metal/wood sections and the bulkhead at the shore, are very near their expiration date. A quote for replacing these sections of the structure was around \$135,000. However, because of the anticipated cost, the work will almost certainly require a bidding process, so the final amount could vary. The Chair asked the Board to authorize a capital fund raising campaign to rework and rebuild this essential infrastructure to a very high standard. Motion by Mr. Brady, second by Mr. Will, passed unanimously.

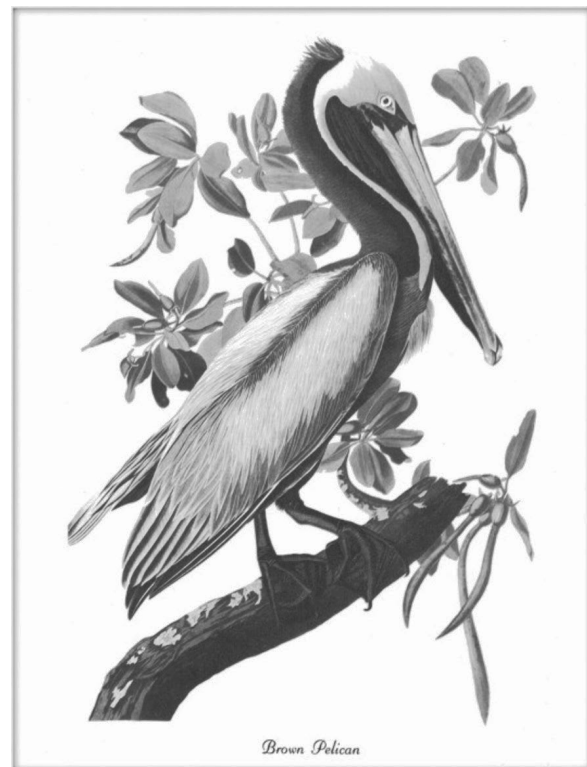
C. LCM/Compactor Receivers: These topics were addressed during the island manager’s report.

New Business

A. On-going or Board Subjects: Mr. Brady asked to add a discussion of our fee structure to the agenda for the next meeting of the Board, in response to consistent increases in the cost of insurance. Ms. Shanks asked for the current fee schedule to be published in this newsletter. {Class III and debris removal- \$2 a cubic ft. with a \$25 minimum. Road Use Fees are as follows— Golf Cart is \$200, Single axle vehicles and boat trailers are \$500, ATV and UTVs are \$500, Two axle vehicles or equipment, cars and pickup trucks, vehicles under GVW of 12,500lbs are \$600, and Dump trucks, heavy equipment or vehicles over GVW of 12,500lbs are \$700.} The next DICD Board meeting is April 5th at 10:30 a.m. Mr. Buckley noted that the Franklin County Property Appraiser’s office is scheduled to begin their home reviews in April.

Adjournment:

Motion by Ms. Kellett to adjourn, second by Mr. Will, passed by acclamation.



Please Help The Dog Island Conservation District Stay Beautiful!

To have derelict vehicles, golf carts, boat trailers, four wheelers, etc. removed at no charge, contact Mr. Greg Buckley, our Island Manager, during office hours and arrange for their removal. PLEASE don't let flooded and dead vehicles sit out here leaking fluids, taking valuable parking spots and being aesthetically offensive.

To dispose of non-household kitchen/bath items such as lumber, appliances, furniture, roofing materials, large cardboard packaging/boxes, etc. please contact Mr. Buckley and arrange with him where and when to place such items and please pay the \$2.00/cubic foot cost. *Update: The District will soon be accepting credit cards. Apologies for it taking so long to set up.*

Remember—Household garbage (Kitchen/Bath) **ONLY** in our compactor **PLEASE!**



**Help Protect
Our Sea Turtles**
*Peak Nesting and Hatching Season
is March through October*

Since ancient times, sea turtles have crawled onto Florida's beaches to lay their eggs. That phenomenon continues to this day, and it is up to us to ensure that they can do so safely and without disturbance.

You Can Help!

Thank you
*for being a steward of Florida's
incredible natural resources.*

Lights Out
Artificial lights disorient sea turtles. Turn off property lights that are visible from the beach, and leave flashlights, lamps, cell phone lights and other temporary lights at home. Close window coverings or install window tint to prevent interior light from reaching the beach.

Give Them Space
Do not interfere with nesting females, eggs, or hatchlings. Give them space, allowing sea turtles to find a suitable nesting area and ensuring hatchlings reach the ocean.

Leave No Trace
Sea turtles need a clean, flat beach to safely nest and reach the ocean. Fill in holes, knock down sandcastles, and remove all furniture, sports equipment, and trash before you leave.

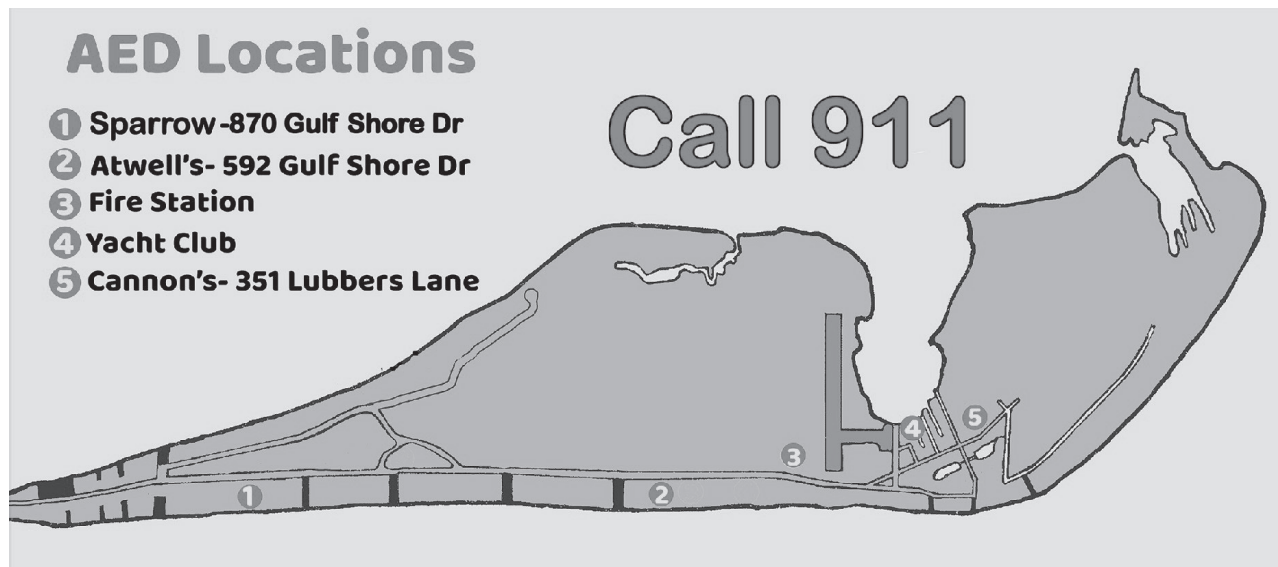
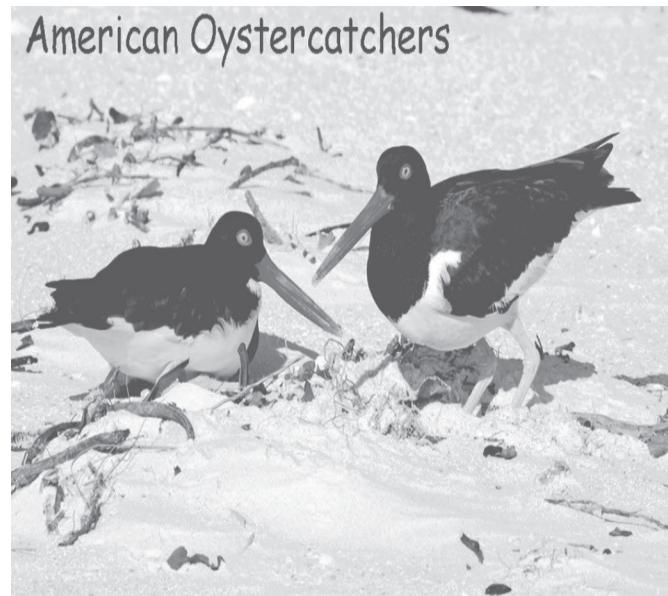
Let The Dunes Bloom
Dune vegetation provides habitat for wildlife, screens artificial light, keeps beach sand in place, and protects coastal homes from storm surge. Help protect the vegetation by not walking through beach dunes.

THANK YOU for your assistance! Greg Buckley (850) 943-0604

Next Up: Q3 2025 DICD Board Meeting: April 5, 2025 10:30am at DICD Yacht Club

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Chairman Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Island Manager Report
7. Volunteer Fire Department Report
8. Airport Committee Report
9. Old Business
 - A) Fee Schedule Consideration
 - B) Ferry Docks
 - C) LCM/Compactor Receivers
10. New Business
 - A) On-going or Board subjects
 - B) For the good of the order
11. Adjourn



Handy Reference Information

DICD Website: <http://dogislandconservationdistrict.org>. Includes legal descriptions, financial reports, board member contacts, newsletter archives, and more about the DICD.

The Dog Island Guide: <https://dogisland.net/dog-island-guide>. A project that is independent of the DICD and contains emergency contacts and other information about living on the island: owning and building, transportation, long-term living, hurricanes, and island wildlife.



Dog Island Conservation District
PO Box 14288
Tallahassee, Florida 32317-4288

REMEMBER!

